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Table of Contents and Prologue

Nicole Ellis

Jason Fedak

Gabe McKee

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Raymond Streeter

Prologue Image

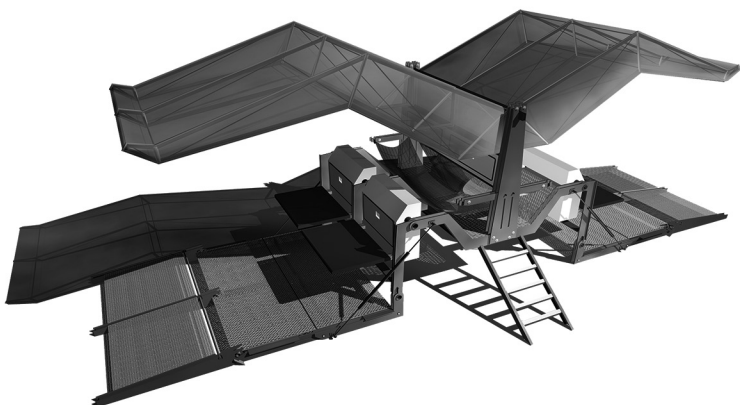
Dan Pitera,
Detroit Collaborative Design Center

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Prologue



Design, as a practice or profession, is typically viewed as a humanitarian art. Designers produce cities, buildings, paintings, sculpture, landscapes, and household objects that are gifts to enrich the world. Historically design services have been commissioned by wealthy patrons seeking monuments of great importance and beauty; art pieces for all of society to enjoy. What happens when designers concentrate on making small contributions to society instead? Since design can be bought and sold, why not donate it? When humanitarian designers lend their services to the underserved population, the results seem to surpass aesthetic qualities to touch the world on a deeply human level.

...the built environment is not all about the aesthetics, but rather what the space accomplishes.

—Brian Copeland

In this issue we will examine the theoretical basis for humanitarian design, and why it is important to enrich the lives of the underserved.

N. Ellis/J. Fedak/G. McKee, Editors